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A few words only in exemplification. Why is there so much foolish legislation? Because legislators, being human, mistake their own views for the voice of the universally rational element of mankind. Because, not knowing that society is a *growth*, they try to substitute the work of individual man. Legislators, for example, have tried to destroy intemperance by legislative enactment, and the futility of their efforts is conclusive evidence of the unfitness of their means. Men may even *seem* to carry their points—may, as a legislative body, do unwise or unjust acts,—and yet, because the state is a growth (and it seems to me that no other view will explain this), their acts fall dead. Legislatures have decided it rational to hang him who steals a horse, but the law is inoperative; legislatures have proscribed intemperance, but the evil has not been destroyed. On the other hand, human wilfulness or human malice may try to destroy the state, but the effort is vain, for it, like Christianity and all truth, lives on in spite of foolish zealots or stupid malignants.

The state, like the plant, cannot prevent our giving it what it does not need for its perpetuation, but it will *assimilate* only what its laws of growth require; it will appropriate all that is truly rational, and repel the vain efforts of individual man to infix his whims and crudities.

PHILOSOPHEMES.

By A. BRONSON ALCOTT.

Genesis.

Desire is the live spark of our immortality, all delights being seminal, spirit in tranfusion, and bodies in embryo.

The Procreant instincts out of spirit's chaste seat,
Peopling Cosmos from Chaos in fashion complete.

The Incarnation were not without sex, nor were "either sex alone but half itself." Hereby the One defends and embodies his Personality, returning into his Godhead while peopling matter with his image and intelligence. And this the ancient wise men obscurely signified in those mysteries wherein they represented the virile Hermes as the ideal Reason generating the visible world. The genesis is spiritual; creation a descent and degradation: the spirit stooping to

organize. Effects depend from their causes in descending series and degrees successively. Spirit, the Cause of causes, incarnating, lives first, fashioning mankind, and through them generating the visible hierarchy of creatures and things in Nature. Nor were Nature extant had man preserved his rectitude inviolate. Nature being the man filling the void where himself should be; the man dismembered, deposed, he treading the while upon the prostrate torso of his fallen self. Behold the lapsed man striving throughout to recover his former self, but, wanting the generative force for self-recovery, pauses, faints, falls short of his quarry;—systole, diastole, tugging incessantly at the cisterns, life ebbing from organ, atom seizing atom, element preying on element, till all return into the common chaos for renewal and regeneration.

The Genesis is spiritual. The spirit incarnating souls in fitting organs, first fashioning mankind personally, and through his volitions generating the visible hierarchy or chain of creatures and things in Nature. Nature is the physiognomy of mind, and answers in feature and limbs to man's loyalty or lapse from the law of personal rectitude.

Sense.

Our very senses furnish illustrations of our soul's immateriality in the perishing substances of which themselves are organized, as these were life's effigy and weed. Superior to the changes of substances, the soul converts these the while into similitudes of its own imperishableness as it lends to all things visible their seeming consistency and permanence. Yet a thought dispels the illusion and dissipates the fleeting show in a moment.

"Invisibilia non decipiunt."

Sense, says Plotinus, is but the employment of the dormant soul. So much of the soul as is merged in body, so far it sleeps. And its vigilance is an ascent from the body, since a resurrection with body were but a transformation from sleep to sleep and from dream to dream, like mere passing in the dark from bed to bed. That alone is the real of ascension which frees the soul from the shadowy essence of body.

The One.

"Of inferior beings, the human mind, self, or person, is the

most simple and undivided essence. And the Supreme Father is the most perfect One."

The presupposition of Personality alone renders the One thinkable, and things realizable to the Mind. There is nothing where *the One* is not. Matter were not, void of Spirit to animate and uphold it. And where Spirit is, there is Personality, a self-determining will reconciling extremes, converting other into one. The will includes threefoldness of operation, being the sub-God in the Person, and bridging the chasm between Nature and Spirit. Three in one and one in three, the Person transcends Nature and denominates it. It is the copulative of Spirit. There is but one One, since to be One is to be a Will, not having a will merely, but to be personally inseparably One and eternal. God is the One, the Person; and Man is one personally embosomed in His spiritual Oneness, bereft of which he were an individual creature, and no more. Nature is other, or many; being less than one, or oneless, will-less, impersonal, and a thing, dual, divided, Nature recoiling on itself. Man partakes of the triple life in virtue of his will. Inferior creatures fall short of Personality, being under fate or the twoness that bestrides them. Lapsing out of the oneness, souls dualize themselves, debased hereby into duplicity and individualism. This Personal identity is spiritual, not numerical merely, souls being one, bodies not one. Any number of bodies, or of things, never attain to unity, since it is the one in each that defines and denotes it. The Personality is copulative, not disjunctive, and notation is not predicable of body but of spirit.

One is the One in holy Three,
While lapsed in Self's duplicity.

Faith.

Faith suffices where knowledge is wanting: an instinct, having a lively human root in some tender association, some outward rite—some sacred place, person, book—all clearly entwisted with the affections and cropping out in some homely mythology, running far into the past; then wonder, credulity, superstition qualifying all these persuasions, and idealizing what is thus cherished and loved as a part of one's Personality itself. Man is not a terrestrial plant but a celestial, blossoming in time, to ripen its fruit in eternity.